

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, Aug. 18, 2005

Daniel Boone City Building, 701 E. Broadway

Mezzanine Conference Room

7:00 pm

MINUTES

Commission Present: Dan Devine, Bill Pauls, Terry Kloeppe, Larry Hine, Julia Grus, Marin Blevins

Commission Absent: Dennis Knudson

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Gary Ristow, Tammy Miller

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm by Devine.

Agenda: The agenda was approved on a motion from Kloeppe, seconded by Pauls.

Minutes: The July minutes were approved on a motion from Kloeppe, seconded by Hine.

Monthly Report: Blevins asked about the increase in swimmers at Oakland this year, as compared to last year?

Hood answered that it was mainly attributable to the warmer weather this summer.

Pauls asked about individuals jumping off of landscape blocks at the Skate Park, as noted in the Park Ranger's report. He asked if the blocks could be cemented or removed?

Griggs said they would look for a solution to the problem, which may consist of anchoring the blocks with long lags. He added that the Park Ranger has issued trespass warnings to those who have been caught.

The July monthly report was approved on a motion from Grus, seconded by Pauls.

Public Hearing

Devine opened the public hearing on the Parks and Trails Master Plan.

Griggs said updates are being considered to keep up with changing needs and growth of the city. The plan is a living document, and needs to be constantly reviewed and shaped, rather than placed on a shelf.

Work on the Master Plan started in 2001 and it was adopted by the City Council in 2002. It highlights acquisitions needs for a ten-year period under estimated development conditions. We are nearing the halfway point of this period and thus are reevaluating. Updates may be needed because of rapid development in outlying areas and increasing property costs. Anticipating growth may save taxpayers money. Trails are also needed to connect these new developments and acquisitions.

Under the Master Plan, neighborhood parks are intended to serve residents within a half-mile radius.

Typical amenities of these parks include a playground, gravel trail, basketball court, non-reservable shelter and open play field. No parking or restrooms are usually placed in these parks.

Since 2002, six of original 18 parks identified have been acquired, including Auburn Hills, LOW South, Grasslands, Cascades, Mill Creek and Longview.

A proposed change to the Neighborhood Parks Plan is to acquire eight more parks located in the outlying fringes of Columbia where development has begun or is likely. Griggs shared a map showing where these additional parks would be. The north area in particular is growing quickly, as is the area south of Columbia.

Hood added that major development is occurring east of Lake of the Woods Recreation Area. Staff is wondering if an additional site should be planned. He would like the Commission's thoughts on that.

Griggs described possible changes to the Trails Plan as well. Priorities are specifically related to growth areas and park development, including along Route WW and Highway 63, around Stephens Lake Park and Rockhill Park, and connecting the recently acquired Atkins and Phillips properties. Griggs shared a map outlining these potential new trail connections.

Griggs and Hood asked for questions.

Hine asked about the Grasslands neighborhood park, if this was donated by residents?

Hood answered yes, this has not been developed yet, but it has been targeted in CIP to be funded by ballot issue if that passes.

Member of media asked about the cost of acquiring these new neighborhood parks?

Hood said staff is budgeting about \$200,000 per site, for a 5-10 acre site.

Devine closed the public hearing and asked for Commission comments.

Kloeppel said he would be interested to see how the recent \$25 million pilot program would affect this?

Hood said it was too early to tell. The pilot program is for an alternative transportation system and will be used to develop sidewalks, trails and pedways to connect key areas of the city. Any trail argued to have a dual purpose of transportation and recreation could be a potential project under this program. The MKT Trail is an example of this. But until we know specific guidelines of the program, it is hard to tell which potential trails could qualify. Hood is hopeful that some of them will qualify. It's important to have a well thought out trail system in place.

Griggs added that staff has refined locations of trails on sides of creeks. Staff has done a better job of walking sites and preparing routes.

Pauls asked about staff and maintenance issues growing along with the parks and trails systems. He said he gets questions about taking care of what we have.

Hood said that is true of entire parks system.

Blevins added he has seen plans in other towns, and this plan seems comparable to other cities of similar size.

Griggs asked what the Commission thought about adding a neighborhood park east of LOW?

Hood said if there was no objection, staff feels one should be added there.

Devine asked about the timing of the new additions, that it would be important to get in early, but not too early.

Hood replied that this Master Plan is for 5 to 10 years, and it's very unlikely that all 26 sites for neighborhood parks will be acquired. The goal is to identify sites if the potential comes up for acquisition, so that staff can move forward and take advantage. An instance of this is the Cascades, which was donated by the developer. Hood cited this as being a good example of being in position to take advantage of growth.

Griggs added it would advantageous to have numerous sites identified right away. He said Steve Saitta does a good job of getting plans to developers and surveyors. These are key relationships to have.

Blevins moved to recommend approval of both areas of proposed changes to the Master Plan, including adding a neighborhood park east of LOW. Pauls seconded the motion.

All in favor: Devine, Pauls, Kloeppel, Hine, Blevins, Grus

Motion carried.

Rezoning – Maple Bluff subdivision

Griggs said the rezoning would result in no change in the Maple Bluff development; it is a simple annexation request. Parks staff sees no adverse impact on surrounding park areas, including the MKT Trail, Twin Lakes and Hinkson Woods.

Blevins asked if the reason for the annexation was utility-related.

Griggs said yes, he thought so.

Kloeppel made a motion, seconded by Pauls, that the Commission agreed to inform the Council that they see no potential for adverse impact to parks or trails from the proposed rezoning.

All in favor: Devine, Pauls, Kloeppel, Hine, Blevins, Grus

Motion carried.

Request for Joint Meeting

Hood told the Commission that he had a request from Boone County to hold a joint meeting between the city's parks commission and the county's parks commission. Hood asked if the Commission was interested

in such a meeting, and if so, what type of things would they like to see on the agenda?

Hine asked Hood if he had received input regarding an agenda from the county?

Hood said he thought a possible item may be discussion of the Atkins property, but he had really received no direct indication.

Kloeppel asked when the meeting would be?

Hood said the county usually meets monthly in the late afternoon, but they would be willing to meet in the evening. There are nine total commissioners.

Grus asked about protocol with informing City Council about such a meeting?

Hood said staff could send a note to Council informing them of the meeting.

Hine said he would want an agenda in advance to be able to prepare.

Kloeppel asked how the meeting would be structured?

Hood answered that the joint meeting could be at regularly scheduled time, and then could adjourn for a regular meeting if there were any pressing items. He said the meeting could be held at the ARC in September or at the October meeting, although the Oct. meeting is in the middle of the NRPA convention.

Devine asked Commissioners to submit any items for an agenda to staff and then asked staff to send a note to City Council informing them of a potential meeting.

Hood said the staff would consider a September meeting first, then October as a backup.

Pauls moved that the Commission hold the joint meeting in September if possible, and then October as a second choice, second by Kloeppel.

All in favor: Devine, Pauls, Kloeppel, Hine, Blevins, Grus

Motion carried.

FY'06 Budget

Hood informed the Commission that staff recently attended a budget work session with the City Council. Formal hearings are scheduled in September with the budget slated for final approval at the Council's second Sept. meeting. Hood presented the proposed FY'06 budget to the Commission, which is a 2.1% increase from last year at \$11,299,863. Hood said the budget includes 77 ¾ positions, an increase, which is likely the biggest change from last year's budget. Temporary employees can total 500 in the summer.

Other budget highlights pointed out by Hood:

- A 6.7 percent increase in the general fund, while keeping an eye on operating expenses.
- Rec Services, which includes maintenance of facilities, not just programs. The Rec budget is decreasing by .5 percent. This is attributed to depreciation of capital projects. About \$4 million will be collected from fees.
- New staff includes a full-time horticulturist and a ¾ time maintenance person at the Armory.
- New equipment at the ARC.
- Capital improvements, including Flat Branch Phase II, Douglass Park, Armory, PMC, Smith-Manhasset Park development and other road and park improvements as outlined in the Master Plan.

Devine asked if surveys were ever done of ARC users?

Ristow answered that much of that is done on-line.

Pauls asked if staff thought ARC membership fees should be higher for non-residents.

Hood said that question has been discussed for all parks programs. He said at this time, Columbia considers itself a regional center which charges sales tax to all who come into the city, including much of mid-Missouri, thus choosing not to differentiate with fees. However, that may be reconsidered in the future.

Ristow pointed out that the city's financial assistance program is only for city residents, and it can sometimes be problematic to prove residency. He said it would be an added expense to verify residence.

Hood said the staff felt comfortable with the budget, and was especially pleased with the new employees.

Ballot Issue Update

Hood described the six questions approved by Council to be placed on the November for consideration by

city voters. Parks and Rec will lead the questions with Proposition 1 (extension of 1/8 cent sales tax for five years) and Proposition 2 (extension of 1/8 cent sales tax for two years for multi-use recreational facility). City Council is considering detailed list of projects under Prop. 1. The list may include acquisition and development of 7 neighborhood parks, numerous trail improvements and a lengthy list of parks improvements, all of which are under the Master Plan. Hood told Commissioners he would try to have a detailed list for them at a later time.

Hood added that the Mayor was forming a Citizens Committee to promote the ballot issues.

Pauls asked if the staff had substantial input into the Prop. 1 list?

Hood answered quite a bit.

Council Items

Hood informed the Commission about these items discussed at the Council meeting Monday:

- The building at Field Park has been in the process of being renovated and developed for several years. Staff had recommended the building be removed, but the neighborhood opposed this move. Council entered into an agreement with Human Development Commission and the North Central Neighborhood Association for a five-year period to renovate the building. The agreement will expire Sept. 19, 2005, and no work has been done on building. The group has reformed and asked for an extension of the agreement. Council asked staff to draft an ordinance granting a one-year extension to the group. If nothing has been done after an additional year, Hood said parks staff would have to review what could be done with the building. Estimates have shown that it could cost between \$150,000-\$200,000 to restore the building.

Blevins asked if the park was well-populated?

Griggs answered that the school uses it quite a bit, but it mainly serves as green space for the neighborhood.

Capital Projects Update

Griggs shared project updates:

- Stephens Lake day camp-Staff is continuing construction of pre-fab building, currently framing it.
- One-table shelters at Stephens have been installed.
- Perimeter trail at Stephens is nearly complete, with three accesses left open, pending construction.
- Shelter is being replaced at Indian Hills Park.
- Shelter is also being replaced at Paquin, this one using CDBG funds.
- Radio control car track at Cosmo is being built.
- Harris Shelter at Cosmo is being relocated.
- Tennis court resurfacing projects are nearly done at Cosmo, then staff will work on Fairview courts.
- Work on Bear Creek at Garth is complete, with a drinking fountain added. The fountain will soon be functional.
- At Nifong, the chimney on the Pop Collins cabin is complete.
- At Nickell Golf Course, a restroom was renovated to house a pump system for irrigation.
- The lake at the Phillips property is being graded. The ultimate goal is to have a trail around the lake.

Commission Comments

Pauls asked about the exercise stations at Lions-Stephens, Oakland and MKT, if those are used?

Griggs said staff has received a mixed response from the Park Patrol about this. A problem is that the equipment becomes outdated and is difficult to replace while staying consistent. He said the newer exercise stations being produced now are nicer and target stretching more than other types of exercise. These new stations may be added at some point.

Staff Comments

Hood reminded the Commission the next meeting on Sept. 15 would be at the ARC. The deadline is also approaching to register for the NRPA convention in San Antonio in October.

Public Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.